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SUBJECT: ITALIAN PARLIAMENT RATIFIES U.S.-EU GPS-GALILEO  
COOPERATION AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 19459

¶1. Per reftel, on March 4 SCICouns spoke with Counselor Raffaella Campanati of the Foreign Affairs Ministry's (MFA) European Union (EU) External Relations Office, to follow up on the status of Italy's ratification of the U.S.-EU Global Positioning System (GPS)-Galileo Cooperation Agreement. Campanati replied that the Italian Parliament had approved the law implementing the agreement (a requirement under Italian law for such ratification) on February 19. Italian President Napolitano is expected to promulgate the law no later than March 19. The law then must be published in the Gazzetta Ufficiale, Italy's equivalent of the Federal Register. The day after it is published, the law will enter into effect for domestic purposes. However, since the entry into force of the agreement depends on all member states completing the ratification process, the law will only be in effect for practical purposes once others have completed their ratifications as well. Italy will formally notify the European Commission of its ratification once the law has been published in the Gazzetta Ufficiale, which Campanati said likely will take place in April.

¶2. SCICouns noted that a plenary meeting under the Cooperation Agreement may be held in summer-fall 2008 to review progress and give broad direction to the authorized working groups. Campanati, who is new to the MFA, had not yet heard anything about the proposed plenary meeting, but she welcomed the news.

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